

# The Factors Influencing Young Voters In Determining The Choice Case Study: Local Election In Bengkulu

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## Abstract

*The aim of this study was to create an explanatory model that allows analyzing the factors influencing young voters in determining the choice; case study in local election in Bengkulu. We also analyzed the combined relationship between these variables, together with age, and area of origin. We worked with a sample group of 400 young adults between the ages of 18-22 from the city of Bengkulu (Indonesia). The data was subjected to a structural equation modeling SEM analysis, which allowed for the corroboration of the following hypotheses: the higher the education level, the more the interest to choose; the more the experiences, the better the perception to choose; the better the tagline and propaganda, the more interest to choose; the closer the ethnic, the more interest to choose. The result showed that candidate who has more experiences is the most interest candidate to choose by young adult voter . The model obtained allows for discussion of the explanatory value of these variables.*

*Keywords: Young Adult Voter, SEM, Bengkulu*

Political Knowledge (PK) is one of the core variables in the study of mass political behavior and differs from other components of political involvement for being objective rather than subjective. Citizens vary substantially not only in their levels of information or political knowledge but also in the content of this information: current issues, active individuals in politics and government, constitutional

principles underlying the government, the real-life operation of the political system, among others. Our approach to PK is formed specifically by socio-cognitive theory. Numerous studies (Brussino & Rabbia, 2007; Fiske, Lau, & Smith, 1990; Gordon & Segura, 1997; Rhee & Capella, 1997; Somin, 2006) maintain that PK is an indicator of the degree of development of political systems. As a result, exposure to political information, motivation, and cognitive ability define the cognitive process and the learning or level of PK. From this analytical perspective, motivation, ability and opportunity are inextricably connected. Among the motivational dimensions, Van Deth (2000) refers to interest in politics as the degree to which politics appeal to the curiosity of citizens. In this regard, it would be equivalent to paying attention, which is a necessary prerequisite for learning any subject. On the other hand, starting from the theory of autoefficacy, it can be understood how people judge their own capabilities, and how these autoperceptions of efficacy affect an individual's motivation and behavior (Bandura, 1986). The feeling of personal efficacy is a cognitive mechanism related to individuals' judgments about their own capabilities; based on these judgments, they will organize their knowledge and carry out their actions. Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde (2002) maintain that people who feel that they have political efficacy can feel psychologically motivated to become involved and participate in politics. In this line of thought, the model proposed by Bennett (1995) maintains that education and the level of intelligence affect cognitive abilities, which are essential for people to become politically informed. Meanwhile other socio-demographic variables, such as age, ethnicity, gender and socio-economic level, affect people's opportunities to acquire information on politics, while the force of partisanship, the concern for the results of an election, and the psychological involvement in public issues shape the motivation to pay attention to political affairs. Previous studies suggest that motivational level plays a very important role in relation to PK.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Participants were selected using a random quota sampling (Lohr, 2000). The choice of this type of sampling was due to the need to improve the conditions of a typical random sampling. Although the selection of young adults is not at random, and therefore bias in the selection of participants is not removed, the use of this technique guarantees that the proportions of the sample, regarding demographic characteristics, reflect those of the population at large. In order to achieve this, following the estimated proportions set by the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC), quotas for age, gender and level of education. Participants were selected in ten different locations of the province that are characterized by high concentrations of young adults. The sample was composed of 300 young adults from the Bengkulu, between the ages of 18-23.

### **Measurement Tools**

Data related to the participants' age and education level was obtained through the use of closed-ended, mixed-choice questions. It lists a group of twenty questions designed for measuring interest factors. The score was obtained from the sum total of the scale. Studies of internal structure validity, performed using factor analysis by the method of Principal Axes, showed a one-dimensional structure: both the Kaiser and Guttman rule of eigenvalues greater than 1 and the Scree graph showed the existence of one underlying factor that explained 43% of the variance in responses to the test (eigenvalue = 3.64). It should be pointed out also that the scale showed a satisfactory degree of internal consistency ( $\alpha = .91$ ).

Researcher had to use the 5-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree (value = 1) to strongly

agree (value = 5). The studies conducted to validate the internal structure of the scale by means of exploratory factor analysis (method of extraction of Principal Axes) indicate the existence of one underlying factor that explains 49% of the variance in all items. It is worth pointing out that in establishing the number of factors, both the Kaiser rule (eigenvalue = 2.93) and the Scree graph indicated the existence of one factor. On the other hand, an optimal internal consistency was observed when calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient ( $\alpha = .89$ ).

Finally, the Hahn Scale (Brussino, Sorribas, Rabbia, & Medrano, 2006) was adapted in order to measure the Interest in Politics variable. It has six items that evaluate the interest in political processes, or at least, in the results of such processes. The options to the questions are: 1- strongly disagree; 2- disagree; 3- neutral; 4- agree; 5-strongly agree. The results of the exploratory factor analysis (method of extraction of Principal Axes) indicate the existence of one underlying factor that explains 66% of the variance in responses. The existence of a factor was established using the criteria of Kaiser and Guttman (eigenvalue = 3.95) as well as the Scree graph. Together with this, the results obtained using Cronbach's alpha coefficient ( $\alpha = .90$ ) indicate an optimal internal consistency.

### **Procedure and Analysis of Data**

The collection of data was performed individually, emphasizing the voluntary nature of participation in the study. To evaluate the proposed model, a structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis was performed. This type of analysis allows to empirically contrast theoretically constructed models and it has important advantages when compared to other statistical techniques, since it makes it possible to account for measurement error, estimate relationships with more than one causal link, and incorporate observable and latent variables to the analysis which improves the representation of theoretical concepts and statistical estimations (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In this sense, two observable variables (education level and age) and four latent variables are integrated into the contrasts of the proposed model. All the analyses were performed using the SPSS 20.0 statistical package and AMOS 4.0 program.

### **Results**

First, an exploratory analysis of data was performed in order to know the characteristics of the variables contained in the model and to verify the completion of the statistical requirements for the SEM. To do this, descriptive statistics of the mean and standard deviation were calculated, and asymmetry and kurtosis indexes were obtained to test the normality of distribution. With the objective of determining whether the variables were normally distributed, Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistics were estimated with corrections by Lilliefors: statistically significant results ( $p < .01$ ) were observed in both, rejecting the hypothesis of a normal distribution in the studied variables. However, as pointed out by Pérez (2004), these normality statistics prove to be too sensitive to small deviations from normality when working with large samples. This is why it is recommended to use visual analysis of normality graphs as an alternative approach.

### **Demographic Results**

Demographic data was collected before the respondent started to answer the questions. This data was later being summarized as in Table.\

**Table 1. Demographics of Respondents****Gender**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Valid Male	83	20.8
Female	317	79.3
Total	400	100.0

**Age**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Valid 17-19	202	50.5
20-22	187	46.8
>23	11	2.8
Total	400	100.0

Table shows the distribution of samplings for each of demographic variables. The majority of the samples were female (79.3%) while 20.8% were male. Most of respondent were 17-19 years old (50.5%).

**Validity and Reliability**

Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson, (2010) stated, "One of the primary objectives of CFA/SEM is to assess the construct validity of a proposed measurement theory" (p. 708). "A measurement theory specifies how measured variables logically and systematically represent constructs involved in a theoretical model" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 693). Therefore, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is performed to determine relationship between constructs. Hair et al. (2010) suggest that a reliability test should be performed before an assessment of its validity. "Reliability is an assessment of the degree of consistency between multiple measurements of a variable" (Hair et al., 2010, p.125). Furthermore, Churchill (1989) also stated, "Coefficient alpha absolutely should be the first measure one calculates to assess the quality of the instrument" (p. 68). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was conducted to measure of the internal consistency of the survey instrument.

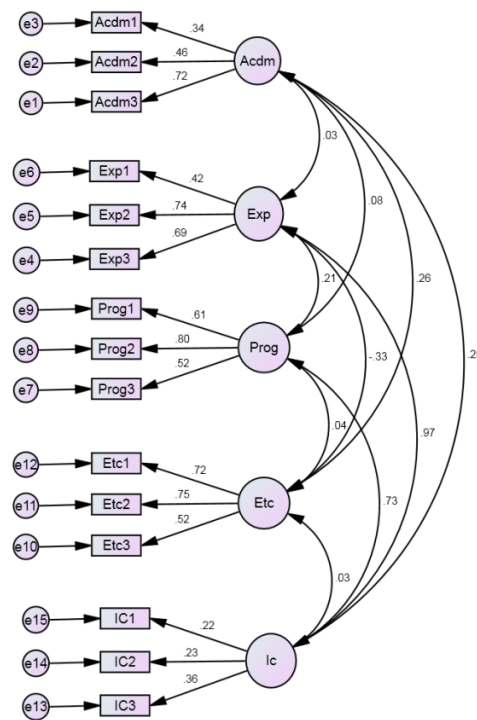
**Table 2. Reliability Statistics**

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
.600	.601	15

From table 2 the reliability of each measure was tested. The instrument is reliable because the Cronbach's Alpha in this study is 0.6 for the 15 items. That is above to the min reliability coefficient of 0.6, so this study is reliable (Cronbach, 1951)

**Measurement Model Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

CFA was performed to examine the relationship between the items and their respective latent variables using AMOS 20. Relationships between the constructs and their latent variables were specified in the measurement model



**Figure1. Confirmatory factor analysis framework**

Variables with more than 5% of lost values were not observed, and only three atypical univariate cases and one atypical multivariate case were observed. We chose not to remove them on the recommendations of Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (1999). Next, in order to verify the linearity of relationships, the dispersion diagrams

between variable pairs were examined and the absence of quadratic components in the evaluated relationships was verified through the Curvilinear Estimation function of the SPSS 20 (Gardner, 2003); it was observed that all variables exhibited linear relationships with each other. Finally, a multicollinearity diagnostic between the variables was performed with the objective of identifying highly correlating or redundant variables. An absence of multicollinearity between the variables was observed, since values greater than  $r = .90$  in the matrix of bivariate correlations (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) were not found, nor were small tolerance values (less than .10) or elevated VIF values (greater than 10; Martínez Arias, 1999).

Before estimating and evaluating the proposed structural model, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed to test the latent variables included in it. As pointed out by Byrne (2001), this analysis allows evaluating the measuring model for each latent variable establishing how it is related to the observable indicators. The obtained results are displayed in Table 2. In order to evaluate the fit of each model, multiple fit indicators were considered, more specifically: the Pearson chi-square statistic, the comparative fit index (CFI), the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), the normal fit index (NFI), the non-normal fit index (NNFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). As can be observed, the values obtained for the fit indexes were optimal considering the criteria proposed by Hu and Bentler (1995) for values greater than .95 in CFI and GFI, as well as the criterion of Arbuckle (2003) for not working with models that exhibit RMSEA values higher than .08. Once the measuring model for each variable was analyzed, we proceeded to evaluate the structural model specified in Figure 1. To do this, the identification of the model was evaluated

comparing the number of data (sample variances and covariances) with the number of parameters to be estimated (Uriel & Aldas, 2005). It was observed that the model was over identified ( $df = 171$ ), which is why we proceeded to contrast and estimate it.

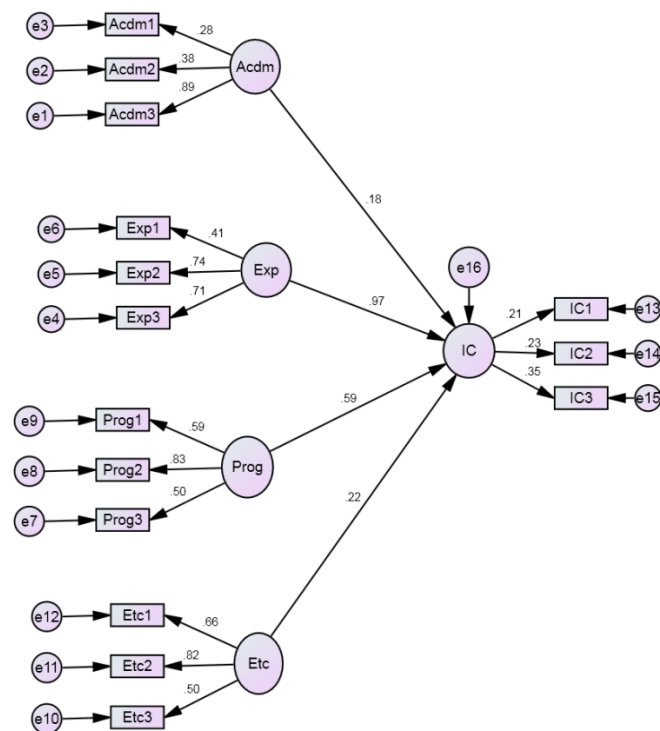
**Table 3. Result of Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Model	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	210.946	80	.000	2.637
Saturated model	.000	0		
Independence model	1012.510	105	.000	9.643

Goodness of fit test was performed and shown in each model to compare with the suggested criteria by the ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom ( $\chi^2/df$ ), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), the adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and the comparative fit index (CFI). The measurement model of CFA indicated a moderate fit:  $X^2/df = 2.63$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.04$ ;  $GFI = 0.92$ ;  $AGFI = 0.90$ ;  $CFI = 0.962$ . Based on this analysis the confirmatory factor analytic model was accepted.

### Structural Equation Model (SEM)

The results of the CFA analysis indicate that each construct of the research model has a strong reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Therefore, it is suitable for the study to use an SEM structural model in this section (figure 8). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was utilized to analyze, firstly, the measurement model and, secondly, estimate the structural model and test the proposed research hypotheses (Guh, Lin, Fan, Yang, 2013).



**Figure 2. The Result of Structural Model Testing**



**Table 4. Standardized Coefficients with Standard Errors**

	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>P</b>
IC <--- Acdm	.038	.029	1.295	.195
IC <--- Exp	.264	.067	3.935	***
IC <--- Prog	.219	.067	3.281	.001
IC <--- Etc	.090	.052	1.738	.082

### Summary and Discussion of the Findings

The hypotheses were tested through structural equation modeling (SEM). Before testing the hypotheses, multi group confirmatory factor analysis was conducted for validation of the survey instrument. The multi group model is supported and provided a good model fit.

It could provide useful implications for them to undertake the findings and implement their politic plan in order to understanding more about the Indonesian young voters. It is important for candidates in Bengkulu when they want to fight in local election.

Based on the findings of this result, experiences showed positive effect on intention to choose for young voter. It means that when candidates has more experiences, young voter will choose them. Later, candidates who has been a mayor or governor shall to show to public. It will be a good campaign and will be a good political education for young voter. However, this research found that program and tagline which offer by candidate also being an interest factor for young voters. This result correlated with the education background of respondents. When the higher education from respondents, it will make them carefully to choose which candidates will be choose. For 2 others (Academic and Ethnic), has negative effect for young voters. It means that those variables are not the interest variables caused young voters vote them.

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